

# Britton 'down but not out' in search for pro career

By RICHARD OLIVER  
Sports Editor

In August, former Texas A&M University basketball star David Britton spoke excitedly of a future with the NBA expansion Dallas Mavericks from his home in New York City.

"I've always wanted to play in the NBA," he said. "I don't even deal with that (not making the Mavericks), realistically. Once that bridge is there, I'll cross it. There's just too much basketball in me to consider that. This is a wonderful body God gave me. I want to make the team."

Britton was drafted by Dallas in May, and when he hit the tryout courts the first week in September, the coaches were initially pleased. A few days later, however, Britton was out.

Now, he's reached that "bridge," and he's finding it's not an easy one to cross. While he spoke confidently on the phone in August, Tuesday afternoon he was reserved and quiet.

"It's mind-boggling," he said from New York. "Things are going OK, but not like I want them to go. I go to a lot of NBA games, and I see people performing. It's frustrating, because I feel I could do as well."

Britton is down, but he's not out. "I'm not really depressed," he said, pausing. "It's just like I'm really frustrated. I want to do something real bad. I still work out, but it's the first time I've been inactive since high school."

"I had a good four days at the practices (Dallas). If a team is 3-25 (Dallas' current record), how bad could I have been? I know I play better than some of those guys."

Britton said he feels the Mavericks had a team already selected even before he tried out.

"I don't think they wanted me," he said. "I was shocked (when he was told he'd been cut). I said 'what?' They had gotten a few veteran guards. But then they gave me the old NBA business talk. I just packed my bags and got out of there."

Other NBA teams have expressed an interest in Britton, but he still doesn't know about his future as a basketball player.

"I still have so much playing left in

me," he said softly, "it's hard to sleep. I think about playing. I think about if we'd won against Louisville last year (in the NCAA regionals), I'd be talkin' to you right now getting ready to play tonight instead of sitting around."

"I think right now I'd go down there (to Dallas) right now and play. Little things like that. It's hard to think about it, going to NBA games and seeing the guys making mistakes."

"I talked to an ex-NBA coach who says you don't have to do that much to get in the NBA," he continued, "just stick to a specialty, just one specialty. It's like (Britton's '79 teammate) Dave Goff never went out of his boundaries. I never knew what my boundaries were, I always wanted to try things."

Although some players who don't

make the NBA elect to play overseas in Italian or Spanish leagues, Britton isn't too keen on that idea.

"I'm not in that frame of mind right now," he said. "I've still got a few things working here at home."

Britton added he has tried out for some professional teams, but de-

ton for his hot-dogging and leadership in last year's SWC Championship Tournament conquest and the subsequent NCAA regionals. The Aggies lost to eventual national champions Louisville in overtime in those regionals.

"The only guard who I've seen who I like down there (at A&M this year) is Reggie Roberts ... the only one I saw with the potential to be a guard. The rest of the potential guards I don't feel was ready to play

with Vernon (Smith) and Rynn (Wright).

"Guards have to think with the forwards and the forwards think with the guards. I felt Rob (Wright) was able to do that, too."

Wright quit the Aggie team earlier this season.

For now, Britton ponders his future at home in New York.

"I've had a lot of job offers, but I'm just tryin' to think."

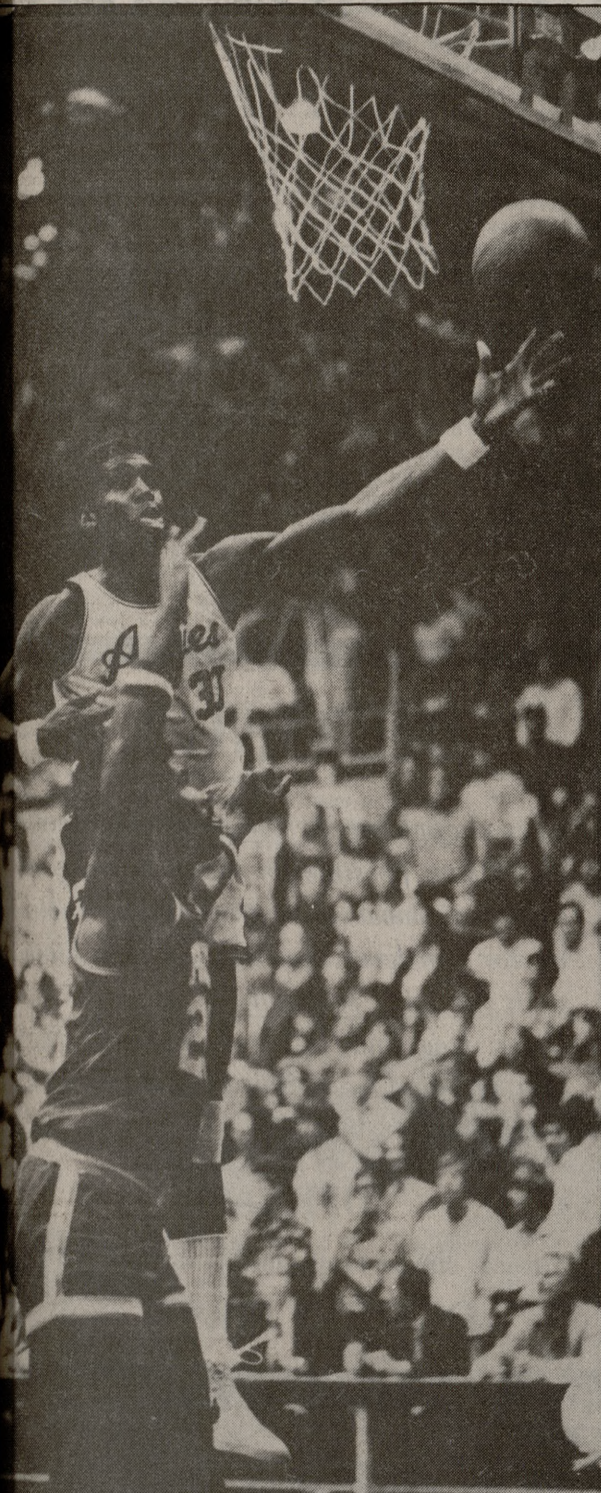


Photo by Brian Blalock

Former Aggie basketball guard David Britton concentrates on the basket as he goes for a layup against Rice in action last year. Despite being cut by the Dallas Mavericks expansion NBA team in September, Britton still has hopes of pursuing a professional career.

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